



North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
State Parks and Recreation

Michael F. Easley, Governor

William G. Ross Jr., Secretary

Lewis R. Ledford, Director

Greetings to all friends of Lake James—today and tomorrow:

Since its inception, the idea to significantly expand Lake James State Park has inspired some very creative thinking. And, it has inspired various groups to come together to work for common goals of conservation and recreation.

Almost as soon as the state park was created in 1987, the people of the region began dreaming of a larger sweep of conservation lands that would also offer innovative recreation opportunities. The citizens and the governments of Burke and McDowell counties were innovative in the way they approached land planning for the future. This cause was embraced, refined and promoted by The Foothills Conservancy and other like-minded conservation organizations. A new way of thinking about how economic development and conservation can be compatible also sparked imaginations at Crescent Resources Inc., which in 2004, made 2,915 acres on Paddys Creek and the Long Arm Peninsula available to expand the 650-acre park. It became a reality in 2005 after the state's General Assembly, the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority and trustees of the Clean Water Management Trust Fund joined in a creative way to finance the land acquisition and to begin facility development.

With this new master plan for the expanded Lake James State Park, we enter another phase. Immediately after the acquisition, the state parks system sought the best advice available about how to develop this state park property with a careful eye toward stewardship. The planning and landscape architecture firm LandDesign took up the challenge. The state parks system, our many partners in this project and the people who will use the state park were closely consulted along the way. The result is a long-range, attainable plan that balances recreation opportunities with our overriding mission as stewards of this stunning foothills landscape. This plan represents the type of creative thinking that this project has required all along.

At all our state parks, we are committed to our mission of protecting natural resources, educating our visitors about those resources and to providing quality outdoor recreation opportunities. The expanded Lake James State Park offers us an outstanding opportunity to realize those goals in the foothills region. That commitment, the continued support of our partners and thoughtful planning will combine for a lasting legacy.

Sincerely,

Lewis R. Ledford